

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PALERM 00409 171806Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 FDRE-00  
HEW-06 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 HA-05 CA-01 SCS-06  
EB-08 IO-14 SSO-00 INRE-00 IC AE-00 /070 W  
-----048026 171815Z /47

O 171550Z APR 78  
FM AMCONSUL PALERMO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2453  
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME  
RUFLSKA/AMCONSUL NAPLES 0161

UNCLAS PALERMO 0409

E.O. 11652: NA  
TAGS: CGEN, IT  
SUBJECT: EARTHQUAKES HIT SICILY

1. THREE MAJOR EARTH TREMORS SHOOK SICILY AND NEIGHBORING AREAS EARLY SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 16. THE EPICENTER WAS IN THE TYRRHENIAN SEA IN A TRINGLE FORMED BY THE AEOLIAN ISLANDS AND THE NORTHCOAST CITIES OF MESSINA AND CAPO D'ORLANDO. FOUR DEATHS HAVE BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO FRIGHT-INDUCED HEART ATTACKSAND A FIFTH PERSON DIED IN A QUAKE-RELATED AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT.

2. REPORTS REGISTERED THE FIRST SHOCK AT 29 MINUTES AFTER MIDNIGHT SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 16, WITH AN INTENSITY OF 4 ON THE RICHTER - SCALE. A SECOND SHOCK CAME NEARLY FIVE MINUTES LATER WITH A RICHTER-SCALE INTENSITY OF 5.6# AND THE LAST MAJOR MOVEMENT WAS RECORDED AT 7:20 A.M., WITH A RICHTER-INTENSITY SLIGHTLY OVER FOUR. SOME 30 "SETTLEMENT" SHOCKS WERE ALSO RECORDED DURING THE EARLY HOURS OF APRIL 16.

3. THOUGH PALERMO FELT SUBSTANTIAL QUAKE ACTIVITY, PROMPTING THOUSANDS TO TEMPORARILY ABANDON THEIR APARTMENTS, THE SICILIAN REGIONAL CAPITAL EXPERIENCED LITTLE PROPERTY DAMAGE. STORY WAS UNCLASSIFIED

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DIFFERENT IN MESSINA PROVINCE WHERE TEN DWELLINGS ARE REPORTED TOTALLY DESTROYED, THREE HUNDRED AS SEMI-DESTROYED AND OVER 2,000 EXPERIENCING OTHER DEGREES OF DAMAGE. SOME 1500 PEOPLE IN MESSINA PROVINCE ARE OFFICIALLY LISTED HOMELESS. IN PATTI, THE MOST SERIOUSLY AFFECTED TOWN, A LOCAL RESIDENT HAS INFORMED US THAT SOME 60 PERCENT OF THE HOMES HAVE UNDERGONE SOME DEGREE OF DAMAGE, AND HOMES FOR THE ELDERLY AND HOSPITALS HAVE BEEN EVACUATED TO AVOID

FURTHER RISK. NORTHCOAST TOWNS OF CASTROREALE, GIOIOSA MAREA AND SANT'ANGELO DI BROLO ALSO SUFFERED SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE. MESSINA ITSELF WAS WITHOUT ELECTRICITY FOR THE MOST OF THE NIGHT. CONTACTS IN STRICKEN AREA, HOWEVER, REPORT THAT ALL PUBLIC SERVICES ARE FUNCTIONING REGULARLY, THOUGH DAMAGE TO PIPES HAS COMPROMISED PURITY OF DRINKING WATER IN SOME TOWNS.

4. THOUGH MANY RETIRED AMERICAN CITIZENS LIVE IN PRIMARILY AFFECTED AREAS, NO U.S. CITIZEN DEATHS OR INJURED HAVE BEEN REPORTED. COLLINS

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## Message Attributes

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**Concepts:** n/a  
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